

Pa232 Counseling

Lesson Pa232-27 Christian Life: Facing Giants

A person who is of great size and power can be considered a giant. Goliath was about three meters (9 feet 9 inches) tall. His armor weighed 58 kilos (125 pounds). Just the point of his spear weighed 6.9 kilos (15 pounds). A giant is not born large but becomes larger as he matures. Unable to deal with the stress or struggles of life, some people say they feel like they are facing a giant. Most, if not all, problems start small, but when we lose control, they can become 'giants' for us. If people live in fear or somehow believe their problems are bigger than God, they may come to you for help. Difficulties can test our faith. When faith prevails, difficulties can make us stronger.

To the Philistines, the man Goliath was a mighty hero. He was their champion. They believed that no one could overcome him. The Jewish soldiers feared Goliath. His countrymen had faith in him and viewed him as a hero. Those from Israel who were afraid, saw a powerful giant. The Philistines gathered their army together for war, in the land of Judah. Saul and the Israelites formed lines opposite them. The Philistine army was camped on one hill and the army of the children of God on another, with the valley between. The Philistine hero, Goliath, had a helmet on his head, armor for his body, and guards for his legs. Each day, for 40 days, he stood on the hill and shouted, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other" (1Sam 17:10). The Israelites were terrified. They had forgotten Yahweh, who had delivered them before.

David, the youngest son of Jesse, was sent by his father to the battle to check on his older brothers. He left his father's flock in someone else's care and he brought grain and bread for his brothers to eat. He really wanted to see how the battle was going too. When David heard Goliath shout, he saw that the men of the army were afraid and ran away. The Israelites were saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out to defy Israel?"

The army could run away from the giant, but often people cannot run and hide from their problems. They need a counselor who will listen and help restore their faith as the Spirit speaks to them. David asked the men standing near him, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" So, David went to King Saul and said, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." But Saul discouraged David, saying he could not win against this giant. Besides, Goliath was older and had more experience in battle.

David explained to Saul, "Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Then he took five smooth stones from the stream, and his sling, and approached the giant. David's faith in God was much greater than any fear of Goliath. He believed the one who had helped him in the past was able to deliver him in the present. Many times God will use a conversation with a counselor to remind a person of God's provision.

David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ... Those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands." David ran toward the giant

and slung a single stone toward him. It struck the giant in the forehead. He fell facedown on the ground. With Goliath's own sword David cut off the giant's head (1Sam 17:25-51).

As counselors we can say that placing confidence in one's fear can make the 'giants' in one's life seem larger. Problem situations which start small can seem gigantic when we lose our trust in God. After hearing this story, let us look at how David saw things—with faith not fear.

- He rejected **fear**. Goliath dared the armies of the living God to fight him. Unafraid, David asked, "Who does this Philistine think he is? Who will remove this disgrace from Israel?"
- He encouraged others to **hope**, saying, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine!"
- He had **determination**: "I'll go out and fight him."
- He refused to be **discouraged** when King Saul told him he was not able to go out and win against Goliath.
- **Experience** and **faith** told him God would save. "I have fought and won before, God will save me from the powerful hand of this giant."
- He had **confidence** in God's help. David picked up his wooden staff, chose five smooth stones, took his sling in his hand, and approached the giant.
- He **knew** the battle is the Lord's. He was not depending on his own strength. He declared, "I am coming against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, whom you have defied. He's the one you fight against, not me!"

The giant in this story, Goliath, was a big man. But even such a big man needed armor and weapons. While encouraging those facing what they believe to be a 'giant' in their lives, remind them how David saw the giant. He stepped forward with faith, seeing God as bigger than Goliath. David remembered what God had done in his past. The Holy Spirit can bring to the counselee's remembrance ways God has met their needs—the things they were delivered from, times their prayers were answered, or previous victories. The Lord may not rescue everyone from their 'giant' by a sword or spear. We can trust, however, that the battle belongs to him.

Fear and faith are both contagious. The 'giants' in people's lives seem smaller when they trust in God. You can encourage them to focus on him, rather than focusing on their problem. Encourage that person to know that their 'giant' difficulty is helping them to increase their faith in God. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1John 4:4, KJV).

This **lesson** is important because it reminds us that we can have faith, confidence, and hope like David's. With faith based on God's promises, people can overcome the 'giants' in their lives. Godly counselors can help them approach their difficulties the way David did.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that God can defeat any 'giant' and the fear it might bring, when a person trusts in God's power.

To **review** this lesson, answer these questions.

1. Who did David say was really fighting the battle with the 'giants' in our lives? [Pause]
A. If you said, "David told us the real battle in our lives belongs to the Lord," you are correct.

2. When can a problem become a 'giant' in our lives? [Pause]

A. If you answered that a problem can become a 'giant' when one's faith is more in the problem than in God, you are right.

3. What is the value of the 'giants' in our lives? [Pause]

A. If you said, "Giants in life help us grow stronger and increase our faith in God," you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to listen to the story of David and his victory over the giant Goliath, until you can share it in your own words. Tell the story to another believer and then discuss the 'giants' common in your lives. Then pray together. Ask God to help you as you counsel people to have the faith that David had when he faced the giant.